

THE
HONESTY
OF THE
PROTESTANT,
AND
DISHONESTY
OF THE
Popish Divinity,
IN A
LETTER
TO A
LADY
Revolted to the
Church of ROME.

By *Anthony Horneck*, Prea-
cher at the *SAVOY.*

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THE
HONESTY
OF THE
PROTESTANT
AND
DISHONEST
OF THE
Popish Dominion
LETTER
TO A
LADY
OF THE
Church of Rome
By Anne, Duchess of
Buccleugh
LONDON
Printed by J. Sturges, at the
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Lane, 1704.

(1)



A

LETTER

Of a Protestant Gentleman to a Lady revolted to the Church of ROME.

Madam,

AND are you indeed got into the onely Catholick Church? And are you sure the Men you have lately believed have not deceived you, as you fancy we have

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have

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Apr. 12, 1919

Alfred Bull

have done? (for tho you may be so Charitable, as to think, that we have not intentionally couzened you, yet since you cannot suppose Us to be both in the Right, you must necessarily conclude, that we have at least ignorantly abused and imposed upon you) and did you ever rightly consider what a truly Catholick Church does mean? Men of Sense and Reason always believed, that a Church which hold's the truly Catholick Faith is a true and sound Member of the Catholick Church, and dares malice it self say, that we do not hold the Apostles, the *Nice*, and *Athanasius's* Creed! The Church of *R O M E* her self

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self confesses, that these Creeds
contain the truly Catholick
Faith: And most certainly
when the *Nicene* Council was
celebrated, and in *Athanasius's*
time that Church was count-
ed a sound Member of the
Catholick Church, that held
that Catholick Faith, which
is expressed in those Creeds;
and do we not hold that
Faith? do we not stand up at
it to express our readiness to
defend it? and what have
we done, that we must not
be counted a Catholick
Church? Is it because we
will not receive things which
the Church of *Rome* hath
since added to the Catholick
Faith? Is it because we will
not admit of the Doctrines

holden

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which.

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which that Church was first induced to believe by the darkness and ignorance of the Ages it lived in, and at last loath to part withal for fear they should be thought to have been so long in an Error? Is it because we will not yield to things which we apprehend to be directly against the Word of God and destructive to that Catholick Faith the Christian World hath professed in all Ages? Is it because we will not deceive the People of the Cup in the Blessed Sacrament, which Christ intended as a mighty comfort to them? Is it because we will not believe the Miracle of Transubstantiation against four of our Senses and reason.

Reason, and Scripture to boot.
 Is it because we will not suffer the Worship of God, or that which is very like it to be given to Creatures, because of the very appearance of the evil of Idollatry, which we are commanded to shun, as much as Idollatry it self? Is it because we will not believe a Purgatory fire, which cleanseth little, but peoples Purfes of their money? Is it because we will not indulge the Pride and Arrogance of a Man at *Rome*, who having first wheadled the Christian Princes out of their means and Power, hath at last made that Power and Riches hereditary to his Successors, under a pretence of a Legacy from Christ?

Is it because we will not believe contrary to the Apostles Rule, that publick Prayers which are intended for the benefit and understanding of the Multitude, must be said in a Tongue unknown to the People? These must certainly be the reasons, why we cannot now passe with the Church of *R O M E* for members of the Catholick Church? That these things were not in the Ancient Catholick Creeds, I hope, you are convinced, for you have read them over, and found none of all these Additions in them: And now I beg of you, in the name and by the mercy of that Jesus in whom you beleive,

to

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to judge, which is most likely to be the truly Catholick Church, our's or their's? our's that keeps to the truly antient Catholick Faith, or their's that hath added things contrary to Scripture and reason and antiquity? And dare you continue in a Church where your very Communion with it, is an approbation of their Actions which are directly contrary to the command of Christ? can there be any thing more contrary to it than their denying the Cup to the Laity? And when you receive the Sacrament but in one kind, contrary to Christs command, do not you Sin and allow of the Sin of that Church you are in? Is not

not your disobedience to Christs Command a Sin, or can you imagine that you are more obliged to Obey men than Christ himself? You confess you dare not live in any one Sin; But how dare you live in this Sin? You talk of the benefit of Confession and absolution, when that very Priest to whom you confesse, and who absolves you, lives in that Sin you are guilty of, and neither absolves himself nor you from it, and you both continue in it, as if the Blind had a mind to lead the Blind? How dare you act thus against your Reason and Conscience? Are you not affraid when you are going to confesse, that God will laugh at

at your Mock Confession,
 since you neither confesse
 that Sin of living contrary to
 Christs Command about the
 Cup, nor are willing to part
 with it ? Tell me not here
 that you drink the blood
 of Christ in eating his Flesh,
 if so, to what purpose doth
 the Priest Consecrate Wine
 for himselfe, if he drinks
 the blood of Christ in eat-
 ing his Flesh ; But suppose
 the Bread were transubstan-
 tiated into the Flesh and
 Blood of Christ, you know
 that the not giving the
 Cup of Blessing to those
 that come to the Lords Sup-
 per, is contrary to Christs in-
 stitution, who distinctly conse-
 crated the Cup, and gave that
 to

to his Disciples, who were representatives of all Believers, as well as the Bread, and peremptorily commanded, *Drink ye all of this*, and I hope you do not call eating the consecrated Wafer drinking the Wafer. But let Us grant you your strange Doctrine, that you do participate of the Blood of Christ in eating the Consecrated Wafer, who gave your Church Authority to alter Christ's Institution? How can Men dispense with an express Law of God? Can they annull what God would have Established, and continue to the Worlds end? And can you consent to so great a Sacriledge? Doth not some horror seize on you, when
 of you

you seriously think that you
 approve of the Priests sinning
 against so notorious a Pre-
 cept, and which he that runs
 may read? And pray Madam,
 wherein have you bettered
 your self in going over to the
 Roman Church? Is this your
 proficiency in Religion to
 forsake a Church, where you
 felt the lively Oracles of Hea-
 ven coming warm upon your
 Soul, and to joyn your self
 to a Church, where you hear
 nothing but Latine Prayers,
 and where the Priest, if he be
 not a good man, may as well
 Curse you as Bless you, for
 any thing you understand of
 his Language or Devotion?
 Is this Your proficiency in Re-
 ligion to leave a Church
 where

where you were taught to
 Worship God in Spirit and in
 Truth, and now to cleave to
 one where they teach your
 Prayers to go upon Crutches
 of Crucifixes, Beads, and I-
 mages ? Doth this look
 like that Noble Religion
 which Christ taught the
 World, and whose design was
 to advance our Rational
 Souls by Contemplation and
 Meditation ? O Madam, you
 are too Young to know the
 Tricks of that Church you
 live in ; they are more po-
 litick Heads than yours is ,
 that had the contriving of it.
 Bold Men, that had Learnt
 not to Blush at a Lye, and
 then thought it their interest
 to Hector the World into a
 belief

belief of it. We that can
 Read Books as well as they,
 and know the History of the
 Church as well as they, can
 see through all these devices,
 which they perceiving are
 angry with Us for discovering
 the Cheat. What was it Ma-
 dam, that you wanted in our
 Church to carry you to Hea-
 ven? Did you want that which
 the Apostles and the Primi-
 tive Christians never want-
 ed? I mean did you want
 more Articles of Faith than
 they subscribed and believ-
 ed! If you wanted that, we
 Confess we could not supply
 you, for we dare say nothing
 and believe nothing with Di-
 vine Faith, but what *Moses*,
 and the Prophets, and Christ
 and

and his Apostles have taught us. If the Scripture contains all things necessary to Salvation, then we teach all that. If the Church of *ROME* knows more Articles than Christ or his Apostles knew of; we will admire her inscience, but cannot satisfy her unreasonable desire. Did you want strictness of Life in our Church? If all the Commands of the Gospel can make you Holy, We teach them all, and press them upon the People, and I presume you do not aim to be Holier than Christ and his Apostles would have you to be. Hath the Church of *ROME* another Gospel to teach you than

than we did instruct you in? if they have, much good it may do them, We are not fond of the Apostle's Curse; *Should an Angel from Heaven bring another Gospel to you let him be accursed.* I know your common Plea that We Protestants cannot rightly interpret the Scripture, because We pretend to no infallibility. And do you blame Us for not being so impudent as the Church of ROME? There is no Protestant but would be glad there were an infallible Interpreter of Scripture instituted by God and recommended to Mankind.

But where shall we find him? Who is it that God hath imparted this Honour
to?

to? If you say the Fathers, you know not what you say, for the Fathers differ many times as much in interpretation of the Scripture, and are as contrary to one another as any Men. If you say the Church that's a hard Word; if you mean Christs Universal Church, dispersed all the World over, you must tell us where it is that this Church hath left an infallible Comment upon the Bible, and how it is possible for a man that will be resolved in a point to go to all Christian People in the World; If you say the Church of *ROME*, you must first shew Us her commission for this infallible interpretation. Secondly
you

you must prove She hath infallibly interpreted the Scriptures, and that those interpretations are infallible in all places. Thirdly you must agree among your selves what part of your Church is infallible, whether the Pope, or an Universal Council, or all Christian People, or whether all these together. To say that this Infallibility lies in the Church, though you know not where, is to say a Needle lies in a Bottle of Hay, and he hath good luck that finds it. Nay I think the Church of *R O M E* hath been so modest, that notwithstanding all her pretences to infallibility, She never hath dared to obtrude a comment on the Bible as infal-

fallible, nor did I ever see any Interpretation of the Bible made either by Pope or Council which hath pretended to Infallibility. If that Church be infallible why do not their own Divines agree in Interpretation of Scripture? if there be an infallible Sense of the Scriptures in that Church, then the Members of that Church are mad not to keep to that infallible Sense, especially if they know where to fetch it, and they offer great injuries and affronts to their Church in differing so much about interpretation of Scripture, when their Church can give them an Infallible sense of it. For that Church having as they pretend the

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Holy Ghost to guide them in all things, I suppose that Spirit assists her in Interpretation of one place of Scripture as well as in another: if they say it doth infallibly assist them in some places and not in all, they destroy their own Principle, and how shall a man be sure, that just in those Points that are in dispute between Us and them, they are Infallible? Is the Spirit divided? Or is he not alwaies the same? Or doth not he exert his power upon all occasions?

Madam, who so blind as those that will not see? Who sees not that the pretence of Infallibility is nothing but a juggle, a device to maintain a triple
Crown,

Crown, and an Engine to carry on a temporal Authority? God indeed hath promised that his Church dispersed through the World, shall last to the World's end, and that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against her, but that promise differs very much from a promise of Infallibility, and suppose it did infer an Infallibility, how comes the particular Church of *ROME* to ingross it to herself, that is at the best but a Member, and a very unsound one, of Christ's Universal Church? It is one thing to be secured against being destroyed, and another to be free from all possibility of Errour. There is no doubt
but

but a sober rational man, that prays earnestly for illumination, and reads the Scripture much, and considers the Circumstances, the Holy Writers were in, when they writ, and the Occasions of their writing, and hath the advantage of Learning, of Languages, and History, may give a very true Interpretation of Scriptures, such an Interpretation as no man can rationally contradict, though he hath not recourse to a Visible infallible guide, and though himself be not infallible. Things may be very certain, though they are not infallibly so, and he that can make things out so, that a prudent man

B

cannot

cannot but give consent to them, and hath no just cause to doubt of their truth, may justly challenge belief from other men. But I will not insist upon this point because I never heard you speak much of it. I will come a little closer to those reasons, that moved you to goe over to the Roman Church, whereof the principal was this, that you were troubled in mind upon the account of your Sins, and could get no satisfaction in Our Church, though you sought it like *Esau* with teares; whereas you did no sooner confess to a Roman Priest, and receive absolution but you presently found unspeakable comfort.

And

And are you sure Madam, that the peace and satisfaction, you found in that Church was not delusion? you tremble at that word; But lets consider the Nature of your peace. When you were in our Church, either you did truly repent of all your Sins, or you did not. If you did not, most certainly you could have no solid peace, but if you did truly repent, as you say you did, what could hinder you from applying the promises made to penitent Sinners to your self, which are the true grounds of comfort and satisfaction? may be you wanted a Voice from heaven to confirm the promise of the Gospel, but have you since heard such a

Voice from heaven in the Church of *R O M E*? I think not ; if you truly repented in our Church, then certainly by the word of God you were assured that your Sins were pardoned, and if they were pardoned, why should you not comfort your self with that pardon ? That which makes you rejoyce now, is because you believe your Sins are pardoned , but if when you were of our Church, you verily believed ; you truly repented, you could not but believe that your Sins were pardoned and consequently you might have taken as much comfort , as you do now. But the Ministers of the Church of *England*, you say,

say, gave me no absolution,
 which the Roman Priest did.
 Why, Madam, did any of our
 Ministers deny you absolution,
 when you could assure them
 that your Repentance was
 sincere? did you ever ask ab-
 solution, and were you refus-
 ed? Nay I appeal to your
 Conscience, did not those
 Ministers you conversed with
 al assure you over and over,
 that you need not doubt of
 the pardon of your Sins so
 long as you did detest and
 abhor them, and watch, and
 strive, and pray against them,
 and were sincerely resolved
 to commit them no more,
 and did avoyd the very oc-
 casions of Evill? and what
 was this but absolution, which

however you might have had performed with greater Ceremony, if you had had a mind to it. It is no very hard matter to guesse at the rise and progress of your peace and satisfaction in the Roman Church. All new things please, and provided they have but a good face, allure our fancy, and this being pleased, Its very natural to defend them, and having once defended them, our Love to them advances, and by degrees we think our honour and Credit is too far engaged to part with them. We see how Children are quieted with new trifles (pardon the uncourtly comparifon, I know not how to shun it) and the
new

new object, they never saw before, surprizes and charmes them, makes them fix their Eyes upon it and cry, if they cannot have it. In the nature of Children we see our own, and embracing new objects, which our sickly fancy is roving after, is but the Scene of Childrens longing for new play things, changed; the Novelty of the thing you were venturing upon, the new Church (new indeed, new to you, and new to Almighty God) which you were to joyn your self to, the Stool of Confession in the Church, and the Priests new habit, and mortified face (which perhaps he owes more to his Country, than to his

Vertue) and affected gravity,
 and assuring of you that
 their absolution had a won-
 derful Vertue and efficacy,
 all these together surprized
 you, and raised your ex-
 pectation, and struck some
 kind of reverence into you.
 Your mind being thus pos-
 sessed with the Idea's of
 these new thing's you never
 tried before, and working
 upon your affections, and
 moving your will to con-
 fess to this man of Won-
 ders, you naturally fell into
 a fancy, that so much for-
 mality and Ceremony diffe-
 rent from that you had been
 used to in our Church,
 had more charmes in it,
 than our plain and honest
 way,

way , and then laid the stress of your pardon upon the new Priests absolution in that formal manner wherewith your fancy being impregnated , it soon diffused a cheereful air in your countenance, and raised some gladness in your heart, because you had now done something more than ordinary, as an Antidote against your Sin. And from hence arose your pretended peace and satisfaction, or delusion rather , because you layd the stress of your pardon upon the absolution of that Roman Priest , and not upon the sincerity of your repentance. If a Priest could forgive Sinners

whether men Repent or no,
 Then indeed you might have
 layd the stress of your pardon
 on that forgiveness of the
 Priest, but since by your own
 confession, that absolution of
 the Priest signifies nothing ex-
 cept people truly repent, for
 you to build your comfort on
 that absolution, when it should
 have been founded upon your
 sincere repentance, cannot but
 be a false fire and a counterfeit
 comfort, if you say; you did
 not fetch your peace from that
 absolution, but from the sin-
 cerity of your repentance, you
 catch your self, for if your true
 repentance must be the founda-
 tion of it, then you might
 have taken the same comfort
 in our Church: if you still re-
 ply

ply, you could not, yos only mean, you would not, for true repentance is true repentance in any Church, and if true repentance causes true comfort, it would have caused true comfort in our Church, as well as in the Roman, and therefore there must be some cheat in this comfort.

The fancy you have since taken up, that the reason, why you found comfort in the Church of *R O M E* upon your confession and absolution, and none in ours, must needs be, because the Priests of that Church are true Priests and those of ours are not, is as solid as your peace. If we have no true Priests in the Church of England, then most certainly

certainly the Church of *R O M E* hath none. The Bishops, which in the beginning of our reformation did ordain Bishops, Priests and Deacons among us, were ordained by Bishops of that Church, and if the Character of Orders by their own confession be indeleble, then it was not all the thunders and Lightenings of Excommunication at *R O M E* could annul it. It's true your ghostly Father very confidently tells you (a Quality incident to that sort of men) That our first Protestant Bishops never received Orders from Bishops of the Church of *R O M E*, but one would admire what Spirit doth possess these men, that
they

they dare contradict all the publick authentick Records we have of their being consecrated by Bishops of the Church of *R O M E* ; they might as well deny , that there were no such Kings of England, as *Henry 7th.* and *Henry 8th.* (for we have nothing but publick Records to shew for it) as deny that the Bishops of the Reformation were never consecrated by Bishops of the Roman perswasion. I am perswaded that if any Papist should come into trouble about the title of an Estate, he hath, and did but know that the name of his Ancestors, the manner of the Convey-
ance

veyance and his just title were in some publick Record or Register, he would soon make use of it, alledge it as a sufficient proof, and thank God for preserving a Record, that is so much for his advantage. I know not, what can be a better testimony in matters of fact next to Revelation, than publick Records and Registers, and we dare venture our reputation upon it, that in the Authentick Registers of the respective Arch-Bishops of *Canterbury*, where fear of being counted Knaves, and Fools, for putting in things contrary to what was publicly known, may justly

justly be supposed, to have kept the publick Notaries from asserting things notoriously false. In these Registers I say it will be found, what succession our first Protestant Bishops had, how Arch-Bishop *Parker* the first Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury* under Queen *Elizabeth* (to go no higher) was consecrated *December. 17. 1559* by four persons then actually Bishops, and who had formerly been Ordained by Bishops of the Church of *R O M E* (*Viz.*) *William Barlow* in *Henry* the 8th. dayes Bishop of *St. Davids*, under *Edward* the 6th. Bishop of *Bath* and *Wells*, under Queen *Mary* driven into *Exile* and return-
ed

ed under Queen Elizabeth,
John Scory formerly Bishop
of *Chichester*, *Miles Coverdale*
formerly Bishop of *Exeter*,
and *John Hodgkins* Bishop
Suffragan of *Bedford*, not to
mention that the Queens Let-
ters Patents (in case any of
the other should be sick or
forced to be absent) were
directed to three Bishops
more, that had formerly been
Popish Bishops and were
turned Protestants (*Viz.*)
Anthony Bishop of *Landaff*,
John Bishop Suffragan of
Theford and *John Bale* Bishop
of *Offery*. But all this hath
been so clearly demonstrated
out of the Publick Records,
first by Mr. *Mason*, and since by
Arch-Bishop *Bramhal*, that he
that

that writes of it can onely transcribe out of them, and those that deny these Records must be men of strange Foreheads, and of the greatest disingenuity. From these men that had their Priesthood from the Church of *Rome*, our Priesthood is lineally derived, so that if our Priesthood be not valid, theirs cannot be, and if Heresie doth not make the Episcopal office void, nor disable a man from conferring Episcopal order on other men (as is evident from the second Council of *Nice*, with your Church an Oecumenical Counsel, which received Bishop *Anatolius* tho consecrated by *Dioscorus* a Heretical Bishop (if I say Heresie doth not make the Episcopal

piscopal order void, then suppose, We were Hereticks our Priesthood which is derived from Popish Bishop, that turned Protestants must be a true Priesthood still, and to this purpose I remember one of your Church said lately, once a Priest, for ever a Priest.

Madam, if your desire to know the truth, be honest and sincere, you should Act like a person that hath a mind to be satisfied, and search the Publick Records, and till then believe not every Tale that's told you; the Common Plea of your Priests, that our Records are sophisticated, and that we have put in what we please, argues only boldness, and ignorance, when they

they can shew neither where, nor when, nor by whom they they were corrupted. Those that talk so, seem neither to understand what a publick solemne thing the Consecration of a Bishop is in *England*, nor to reflect, how difficult it is to fill a publick Register with falsities as to matters of fact, when there are so many hundered men, that know what is done at such a time, and View the Records, and would most certainly speak of it, if they found a flaw in the Relation. But if we should deal thus with the Church of *ROME*, question all their Registers in the *Vatican*, and say, which we might do with

with far greater reason, that they are things packed and invented by men, that have a mind to keep up a faction, I know what Language we should meet withal. But will you boast, say you, of having derived your orders from the Church of *R O M E*, when you believe the Church of *R O M E* to be an Idolatrous Church; Madam, It is not the Office of a Bishop in your Church we find fault withal, but the abuses of it. A Church thats guilty of very great corruption both in Doctrine and manners, may have something thats good and allowable, and he that retains that, is not therefore guilty of her corruption, nor espouses her Errours.

Your

hat Your Idolatry is one thing,
 nd and your Orders are another.
 ea The Jews did take many
 I good things from the Hea-
 ve thens, and the Christians ma-
 ut ny commendable things from
 of the Jewes, but that neither
 rs made the Jewes approve of
 2, the Heathenish Worship, nor
 h the Christians allow of the
 - Jewish Errours. We are not
 t so disingenuous, as to make
 r the breach between you and
 Us wider then needs. So
 far as you go with Scripture
 and true Antiquity we hold
 with you, where you con-
 tradict both, We cannot with
 a safe Conscience bear you
 Company. He that sees a
 Pearl lye among a great deal
 of Trash, if he take the Pearl,
 is

is not therefore obliged to take the Rubbish too, and if we have derived our Orders from you, that inferrs no necessity, that we must therefore consent to your Notorious depravations of the ancient simplicity of the Gospel. The Christians heretofore, that approved of the Baptism of the Donatists, did not therefore presently acknowledge the truth of their opinions, and he that should take a good custome from the Turks, cannot be therefore said to approve of all things that are in the *Alcoran*.

Madam, there is nothing more easie than to cavil at the most prudent Action in the World, especially where

where People take a slight survey of things, and do not with seriousness and deliberation weigh the circumstances of the fact, and do not examine the inside as well as the outside, and I must confess upon the best examination of your actions and proceedings in this Revolt to the Church of *R O M E*, you never took the Right way to be satisfied, for instead of pondering the Arguments and Motives of Our departure from the Church of *R O M E*, and of the reasons we alledge for our Church and Doctrine; you made it your chief imployment to read their Books, and believed what they said to be Oracles, for no other
rea-

reason but because they talked with greater arrogance and confidence. If you say, that you could not judge of Arguments having never been bred a Schollar, I would but ask you how you durst change your Religion then? Did you change it without reason and without ground? and if you are not able to Weigh the strength of Arguments, how can you be sure that you are in the true Church at this time? It is not talk, but Arguments that must demonstrate the truth of a Religion, and if you have not sufficiently weighed the Arguments of both sides, It is a thousand to one, you may still be in the wrong way, and you know
not

not but you may be as much
 out now, as you were for-
 merly; Madam, so great a
 thing, as the change of your
 Religion, upon which no
 less then Eternity depends,
 might justly have challenged
 some years study, before
 you had resolved upon it.
 To do a thing of this na-
 ture upon so slight a Sur-
 vey, Consider whether it
 doth not argue rashness, and
 weakness, rather than Pie-
 ty and Devotion. To leave
 a Religion you have been
 bred and born in, a Reli-
 gion founded upon the Word
 of GOD, and which you
 had Liberty to Examine by
 the Scripture; upon read-
 ing a Popish Book or two,

C

with

without diving to the Bottom of the several controversies, without reflecting on the importance of the points in question, without studying a considerable time which Religion comes nearest to Scripture, and which goes farthest off, is such an Argument of impatience, that you only seem to have yeilded to a dangerous temptation of the Devil. If the Controversies, between the Church of *ROME* and us, are so intricate, as you say, and above your capacity to dive into them, you have then run over to that Church in the dark, and have as little reason to be satisfied with your proceedings, as you believe you have with
our

our way of Worship. You plead, that you have been sitting up whole nights, and weeping and praying, that God would discover to you, which is the true way to Salvation, and from that time forward you found inclinations to go over to that Church; and is this a sufficient argument to justify your forwardness? when you had already begun to doubt, whether our Church were a true Church or no, because you found not that satisfaction in it, your sickly desires wanted, it was then an easie matter to give ear to confident People, that magisterially and peremptorily assured you, that you would find

satisfaction in their Church, and being fed with this hope, your inclinations to that Church grew stronger every day, as Our Mother *Eve*, the hopes of being like GOD, suggested to her by the Serpent, did egg and spur her on to eat of the fatal Tree.

We do not forbid people to pray to GOD to lead or direct them into the right way: (though sometimes it may be a perfect tempting of GOD, when People are in the right way to desire GOD to discover to them, by a Sign of their own choice, whether they are in it or no.) But then, if we pray to GOD to direct us,
we

we must not neglect the means, GOD hath appointed in order to our satisfaction, but must compare Scripture with Scripture, and Books with Books, and Arguments with Arguments, and search, which Religion agrees most with the Doctrines and Practices of Christ and his Apostles, and as the noble Berrheans did, examine all the Doctrines, obtruded to our belief, by the Scripture; and doing thus, and continuing this search, and these prayers together, no doubt but GOD, in his own good time, will answer us and Direct us. But to pray to GOD to direct Us, and not to use the means,

in the use of which he hath promised to direct Us, We do in a manner mock him, or desire him to work a Miracle for Us, or to vouchsafe Us some extraordinary Revelation, when we have *Moses* and the Prophets, and may hear them. And I am confident, had you joyned this way with your Prayer, examined the Doctrines of the Church of *ROME*, and compared them with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, seen whether there be any thing like it in the Bible, and searched whether Christ and his Apostles ever taught such Doctrines, and done all this, not slightly, but seriously and solidly, Its impossible, you.

you could ever have turned Papist, for if our Gospel be true, that Religion can never be true, for there is nothing in the World can run more counter to the Gospel, than the Doctrines of that Church, wherein we differ from them, and they had need put the Bible among prohibited Books, for should the people have Liberty freely to peruse it, the Church of *ROME* would grow very thin and despicable.

I am sensible your Priests find fault with our Translation of the Bible, and Cry out, that there are great defects in it, but when they talk so, they had need talk to

Women, not to men of Learning, and that understand Greek and Hebrew, the Languages, in which the Word was Originally written. The Honesty of our Translators appears sufficiently from hence, because, if any sentence in the Bible be capable of a double sense, they express the one in the Text, and the other in the Margin, and where they do but in the least, vary from the Original, they either discover it by the Italick Character, or give you notice of it in the Margin, then which there can be nothing more honest. And let any Papist of you all shew Us, wherein any thing in our Bibles is ill Translated out of malice or de-

design, or expressed in words; which the Original will not bear.

If We examine Translations by the Original, then sure I am, there is few translations go further from it, than the Vulgar Latine, or the Rhemist Testament, as were an easie matter to prove, if I intended more than a Letter.

You are much taken with their Mortifications and Penances, which, you say, we have not in our Church; But it's a signe, Madam, you did not rightly understand our Religion; We are so far from condemning Mortification and severity of life, that we do commend it, provided it

Be in order to subdue the body of Sin, and to raise our selves to a greater pitch of Vertue, Provided these severities be separated from all opinion of merit, and from an opinion of their being satisfactory, and expiatory, and used only as helps, to work in us a perfect detestation of Sin. And I will assure you there are more in the Church of *England*, that use severities in this humble holy way, than you are aware of.

We indeed do not ordinarily inflict them on all persons, because we know not their constitution, nor what their nature will bear, nor have we any command for it.

it in the word of GOD;
 but these things we leave
 to every mans discretion,
 Urging, that where Sins re-
 quire stronger remedies, there
 men ought to make use of
 them, and if their corrupti-
 ons will not be gone by rea-
 sonings and Arguments, that
 there they must inflict mulcts
 and penalties on themselves
 to drive the Unclean Spirit
 out. Though I must say still,
 that Religious severities and
 austerities are not certain
 signs of a true Religion, for
 Heathens do use them, as
 much as Christians, nay more
 than Christians, Witness the
Brahmanes in the Indies, and
 the religious *Pagans* dispersed
 through all the Eastern parts,
 and

and if you conclude, that therefore the Church of *R O M E* must be in the right, because they inflict great penances, and severities, and make daily use of them, I am afraid, you only forbear turning Turk or Heathen, because you never saw their far greater severities in Religion, than the Church of *R O M E* can boast of: But still the Protestant Church hath not the real Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Sacrament, which the Church of *R O M E* hath: And are you sure the Church of *R O M E* hath it? I am perswaded you did never tast it, nor see it, nor feel it, nor Smell it, and how do you know

know it? what? because the Priests of that Church do tell you so? No, say you, It is, because Christ saith in expresse termes, *this is my Body*. And here, I confess, I stand amazed, that men, with learning and reason about them, can sink into an opinion so contradictory, that, if all the consequences of it be considered, there is nothing in nature can be more absurd, or irrational, and the Church of *R O M E* had need oblige men to deny both their reason and senses to beleive a transubstantiation. Here indeed a Faith is necessary, strong enough to remove mountaines, and though never any Miracles were wrought,

wrought, but were wrought on purpose to convince our senses, yet here we must believe one, which neither sense nor reason can discover. When Christ gave the Sacrament to his Disciples, saith the Apostle, *1 Corinth. 11. 24. He brake the bread, and said, take eat, this is my body, which is broken for you.* It is a wonderful thing, that the word *is*, in the first Sentence, *this is my Body*, should have a literal sense, and in the very next sentence, pronounced with the same breath, cannot admit of a Litteral sense; for the word *is*, in the second sentence must necessarily stand for *shall be*, because Christs Body, when he gave the Bread,

was

was not yet broken : If it will not admit of a Litteral Sense in the very next sentence, because of the absurdity that would follow , that *christ* was *Crucified* , before he was *Crucified*, why should we understand it in the first sentence literally, when the absurdity is far greater ; Nay that the word *is* should not be capable of being understood literally in the second essential part of the Sacrament, This cup *is* the New Testament, that here I say it should import, and can import nothing else, but *signifies* or *is a sign of the new Testament*, and yet must not be understood so, in the first part of the Sacrament, is a thing

we cannot comprehend : And when the Apostle, speaking of the Lords Supper or Eucharist, 1 Cor. 10. 16. The Cup of blessing which we bless, *is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ*, and the Bread which we break, *is it not the Communion, of the Body of Christ* ; Let the rigidest Papist, that hath not quite banished his reason, tell me, how he will make sense of the word *is* here, except he understand it figuratively ; most certainly it cannot be understood literally ; for the Cup is not that Communion, but is a sign of it : One would admire, how men can be so obstinate in a thing as clear as the Sun, and you might as well

well conclude, that Christ is a Door made of boards and nailes, because the Scripture sayth, he is a Door, and that he is a real Vine with green Leaves and Grapes about him, because the Scripture saith he *is* a Vine. But suppose the word *is* in these words, This *is* my body, must be understood literally, how doth this make for transubstantiation? Are the words *is* and *is transubstantiated* all one? A thing may be said to be a thousand ways, and yet without transubstantiation, so that, if by the word *is* you understand transubstantiation, you your selves must go from the literal sense, and assume a sense, which is not express

expressed in that saying. All the Jews are so well versed in the sense of Sacramental expressions, that by the word *is* they understand nothing but *signifies* or *represents*, and therefore its a horrid shame, that Christians, meerly for fear of being laughed at, for departing from an absurd opinion, and losing the credit of a pretended infallibility, should make themselves ignorant in that, which the meanest Jew, even before the Gospel, understood without a Teacher; for we may confidently believe, that no Jew, before *Christ's* time, was so sottish to think, when it's said, *the flesh is the Paschever*, Exod. 12. 11. that

that the flesh or blood was really the Pasſeover, but only a ſign and representation of it, or a token to them, as *Moses* calls it, *ver. 13.* I will not here put you in mind of the ſtrange abſurdities that muſt follow from this Doctrine of Tranſubſtanti-
viz. that *Chriſt*, when he did eat and drink in this Sacrament, muſt have eaten his own fleſh, and that the Apoſtles muſt have eaten his body, while he was at the Table with them, and before it was Crucified, &c. I could tell you, that this Doctrine is againſt the great Article of our Faith, that *Chriſt* is aſcended into Heaven, and there ſitteth at the Right Hand of
 G O D.

GOD until the day of Judgment.

That it is against the Nature of a real Body to be in a thousand places at once. And that from hence it must follow, that the Body and Blood of Christ is capable of being devoured by Vermine, capable of being poisoned, and instead of giving life may be so order'd, that it shall kill and murther; witness *Victor* the third, Pope of *ROME*, and *Henry* the VIIIth. Emperour, who were poisoned in the Sacrament, not to mention a thousand more of such Monstrous consequences: But since, Madam, you do insist so much upon that place of Scripture,

John

John 6, 53. Except you eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no life in you. He but briefly shew you, how ill a Logician you are, either to believe that this is spoke of the Sacrament, or that these words infer a Corporal manducation of Christs real Body and blood, if they be meant of the Eucharist, it will necessarily follow, that Christ oblig'd the Jews, and his hearers to come to the Sacrament at the time he spake these words, for he speakes of their present eating and drinking, (*Except ye eat, &c.*) But this he could not possibly do, for the Sacrament of his body and blood was not instituted till at least

least a whole twelve months after, nor did any of his disciples, at that time, dream of any such thing, as his dying, and being crucified, nor doth Christ speak the least word of it in the whole Chapter, which he must necessarily have done, if he had intended the Sacrament by it, which is all together founded in his crucifixion. For this Sermon of Christ, concerning eating and drinking his flesh and blood, was delivered just about the Feast of the Passeeover, *ver.* 4. After which feast, as it is said, *John.* 7. 1. 2. the Jews celebrated the feast of Tabernacles, and after this they kept another feast of the Passeeover, the last, which

which Christ was at, which was no less than a twelve month after, *John. 11. 55. John. 12. 21.* So that the Sacrament of Christs Body and blood, not being instituted before the last Passover, as all the Evangelists agree, it was not possible, that either the believing Jews, or the Apostles could understand it of the Sacrament (and I suppose Christ intended to be understood) because there was no such thing as yet instituted. Besides, it is impossible, that it can be understood of the Sacramental eating and drinking of the Body and Blood of Christ, for without this eating and drinking there is no Salvation to be had, as it

It is said, *Job. 6.* 53, 54. and if it were to be understood of the Eucharist, we must exclude all Christians from Salvation, that are not in a capacity, nor in a possibility of receiving it, which, I am sure, your own Church will not do.

And that these words of Christ cannot possibly be understood of a Corporal eating Christs flesh, and drinking his blood, but must be understood of a Spiritual eating and drinking, that is, believing in him, and obeying him, and hoping for pardon through his death, which is the Spiritual food of the Soul, is evident from the *54th.* and *56th.* Verse, where every one that
eates

eats of his flesh, and drinks of
 his blood, is said to have
 actually eternal life in him,
 and Christ dwelling in him,
 and he dwelling in Christ.
 That is, Christ loves him with
 a love of complacency, he is a
 Child of GOD, and beloved
 of him, and an heir of Hea-
 ven; But since Wicked men
 come to the Sacrament,
 not only in our Church, but
 even in the Church of *ROME*,
 it would follow, if a corporal
 eating were understood, that
 Wicked men, eating Christs
 body, and drinking his blood,
 have Eternal life in them, and
 that Christ dwells in them, and
 are true Children of GOD,
 and heires of Heaven, con-
 trary to the unanimous consent
 of the Holy Prophets and
 D Apo-

Apostles, who call Wicked men Children of the Devil, and blinded by the Devil, the GOD of the World, and Heirs of damnation. And indeed it is strange, that people should contend for this corporal and sensual eating of Christs flesh, and drinking his blood, when Christ himself saith, *v. 63.* That the flesh profiteth nothing, and that this eating and drinking must be understood spiritually, *i.e.* of Spiritualeating and drinking, which is believing, as it is said, *v. 64.*

You see, Madam, what it is not to make use of your own reason, but to enslave it to the Faith of a Church, which loves to act in the Dark, and would have her Children *Colliers*, and believe what the Church believes

lieves, and know little more than the great Mystery of an *Ave Maria*, or a Rosary.

Time was, when you were pleased to tell our Ministers that though you were gone over to the Church of *R O M E*, yet you had liberty not to pray to Saints, nor to fall down before Images, for that was not thought necessary by the Church of *R O M E*, which only recommends praying to Saints, and Veneration of Relicks, and Images, as a thing useful, and which men have received much benefit by. And indeed I remember, I was told, you thought, that praying to Saints was a kind of Idolatry, and therefore were glad they would excuse you from that Wor-

ship ; but since, I hear, that you are grown as devout a Worshipper of Saints, and peculiarly of the Virgin *Mary*, and do prostrate your self before them, as much as the most tractable Papist in the World. I confesse, I did smell a Rat at first, when your Priests assured you , that Invocation of Saints was not a thing commanded but recommended as useful, and was then confident that before a year came to an end, for all these soft expressions and dispensations with your omission of this worship, they would perswade you to that worship, which then you thought unlawful : My prophecy is come to pass, and the Pill, which seemed

seemed very bitter at first, is swallowed, and become sweeter than hony, and look'd upon as an excellent Medicine. And this, I must needs say, is more than you could have in our Church. But this is our Comfort, that the more ingenuous men of the Church of *ROME* confess, that this praying to Saints or Angels was not heard of, or used in the Christian Church, for the first three hundred years after Christ : and if the Christian Church, for the first 300 years, did not think it useful at all, it is a strange degeneration from their principles, to press it now as useful : Certainly , if *GOD* had thought this invocation so

useful, as your Church pre-
 tends, it is, He would not
 have so peremptorily com-
 manded, *Call upon me in the*
day of trouble; I will deliver
thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.
Psalm. 50. 15. and it's pro-
 bable, the Apostles, in pre-
 scribing so many useful things
 of far less concern, would not
 have left us in the dark as to
 the mighty usefulness of this
 invocation; especially, when
 they had occasion to mention
 the spirits of men made per-
 fect, and did so often con-
 verse with Angels. The
 Angel, *Revel. 22. 8. 9.* thought
 it a very useless thing, and
 would not admit of so much
 as a Religious prostration
 of the Evangelist before him,
 because

because it look'd like Sacrilege, and robbing GOD of his due.

But since your Church in this adoration takes pattern so much by the Courts of Princes, give me leave to suggest to you, how you think, a Sovereign Prince would take it, if a Subject should give any of his servants the title of Majesty, or any other title, which properly belongs to him. There are few titles, that GOD hath, and inspired men have given to him, but you give them to the Blessed Virgin, and though, when you are charg'd with it, you fall to distinctions, and turn, and wind your selves to get

out, yet that shews only a bad cause, because it requires so much artifice and cunning to defend it : but, alas ! it must be Children, that are perswaded and coaxed to believe, that the Church of *ROME* onely counts it useful not necessary, when it is well known, that the generality of that Communion pray to Saints more than to *GOD* (which in the Scripture phrase is honouring the creature more than the Creator) and they never leave that person, that goes over to them, till they have brought him to that Worship of Saints and Angels.

Its pretty to hear these Men talk, that it is only re-
com-

commended as useful, when the Bishops and Preachers of that Church are enjoined, and take their oath upon't, to commend this invocation to the People, as profitable ; and the People are obliged to hearken to their Priests in all things; so that though a Man at first may think this Invocation not necessary, upon the account of its being onely useful, yet from that other obligation he hath, to obey the Priest in all spiritual things, it becomes necessary : But from this scruple we are delivered, Madam, by the Confession of Faith, which the Roman Catechisme doth prescribe, for there it is, that it is not onely useful, but that we ought

to pray unto Saints, and indeed should any man live in that Communion, and omit it, he would soon be looked upon as prophane, and but a half Convert to their Church; they would soon let him know their displeasure, and either fright or flatter him into conformity. And is this the Worship, Madam, which Christ and his Apostles have enjoyned the World? Are not you afraid of doing things, that do so nearly border upon robbing God of his honour and glory? Idolatry is a frightful word, and you do not love to hear it, and therefore I will trouble you with it as little as I can. But
when

when God hath commanded you to come to him directly, without mentioning the intercession of Saints and Angels, how dares your Church of her own head, bring in a Worship so dangerous? who should prescribe the way how God is to be worshipped, but God himself? And if God requires you to address yourself to him without any other Mediator, but Christ Jesus, Have not you just reason to be afraid, that God will reject your Prayers, which are addressed to Saints, as Mediators, contrary to his order and injunction? What Kings suffer here on Earth, in letting their Subjects address themselves by their Servants

to

to them, can be no example here, for God, as he intends not to regulate his Court by the Court of Princes, so we know it is against his Order, to go to his Servants, when we are commanded to come directly to him, and it is such a voluntary humility as deprives us of our reward, as the Apostles expressly tells us. *Coloss. 2. 18.* God knew well enough if men addressed themselves to his Servants, to have access to him, something of the Worship due to him would stick by the way, and rest upon his Servants to his dishonour and disparagement, and therefore he mentioned nothing of this mediate address. Its true we de-
fire

fire our neighbours here on Earth to pray for us, but for that we have a command ; for the invocation of Saints departed we have none, and in vain do they worship me (saith God) teaching for doctrines the Commandments of men, *Mat. 15. 9.* But besides, when you desire your living Neighbours to pray for you, I hope you do not fall down upon your knees to them, nor use the same zeal and devotion to them, as you do to God, and for whole hours together, as you do to Saints departed. But why will you blind your self in a thing which your own practice contradicts you in, you know you do not onely pray to
Saints

Saints departed to pray for you, but you do many times, without making any mention of their Prayers for you, beg of them, with the same reverence, and prostrations you use to God, to deliver you from all evil, and consequently you beg the same Blessings of them you beg of God. And it is but a weak excuse to say, that you intend by those Prayers nothing else, but that by their intercession they may get those blessings for you, for you go contrary to the nature of things, and whereas words ordinarily are interpreters of the mind, you make your minds interpreters of your words and actions, which is a strange evasion,

evasion, and if such a thing be
 intended, why do you lay a
 snare before the Common
 sort of People? who, being
 ordered to pray to Saints for
 such and such blessings, know
 nothing to the contrary, but
 that they are able to dispense
 those Blessings to them, and
 thus commit Idollatry by your
 willful connivance, whose
 blood will certainly be re-
 quired at your Churchmens
 hands one day. Examine but
 your Prayers to the Virgin
Mary in your own Manuals,
 when you have prayed to
 her, and begged of her all
 that you can pray of GOD,
 you add a word or two of
 her intercession, which in
 good truth is nothing but a
 blind

blind, that you may not be
 said to commit down right
 Idolatry. You know those
 Prayers to the Virgin *Mary*,
 which in the Latine, and I think
 in the English Manual too, are
 ordered to be said to the Virgin
 Morning and Evening, the one,
O my Lady, Holy Mary, I com-
mend my self, my Soul and Body
to thy blessed care and singular
custody, and to the bosome of thy
mercy this day, and every day,
and in the hour of my going
out of the World. All my
hope, and all my comfort, all
my afflictions and miseries,
my life, my end I commit
unto thee (speak seriously
what can you say more to
G O D) that by thy most
holy Intercession, and by thy
me.

merits, all my words and actions may be directed and disposed according to thine, and thy Sons Will, Amen.

Where it's worth noting, that first you do put as much trust in the Virgin as you do in GOD, and then afterwards, to make these harsh expressions softer, you desire her to interceed for you, that your works may be directed according to Christs Will, nay and her own, as if she were a Law-giver too? Then follows *Maria Mater Gratiæ &c.* O Mary, Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy, Protect us from the Enemy, and receive us in the hour of Death, which St. Stephen thought was fitter to be said to Christ, when he Cryed,

Cried, Lord *Jesu receive my spirit.* Then follows the Evening Prayer to the Virgin Mary. *O Mary, Mother of GOD,* and gracious Virgin, the true Comforter of all distressed Creatures that call upon thee (this Epithete by the way the Scripture gives to the Holy Ghost) by that great joy whereby thou wast comforted, when thou didst know that Jesus Christ was risen the third day from the Dead impassible, be thou the Comforter of my Soul , and by the same, who is thine and GODS only Son in the last day, when with body and Soul I shall rise again , and give an account of all my actions, do thou Vouchsafe to
 help

help me, that I may escape the Sentence of perpetual Damnation by thee Pious Mother and Virgin, and may come happily with all the Elect of GOD to Eternal joyes, *Amen.* Then follows, vnder thy protection we flee, Holy Mother of GOD, despise not our prayer in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers alwayes, O glorious and blessed Virgln. Not to mention any more prayers of this nature, whereof there is a vast number.

If GOD be a GOD jealous of his Glory, how can he like and approve of such doings? It's true the Honour done to his Servants is done to him, but then it must be

be such Honour, as they are
 capable to receive ; so to
 Honour them, as to give them
 the Epithetes and titles
 which the Scripture gives to
 none but G O D , so to
 Honour them, as to use in
 your prayers to them the same
 outward prostrations, that
 you use to G O D, when you
 pray to him, so to Honour
 them, as to spend more time
 in your addresses to them
 than you do in supplications
 to G O D, as is evident from
 your Rosary ; so to Honour
 them, as to say more prayers
 to them than to Christ, so to
 Honour them, as to joyn
 their merits with Christs
 merits : This is an Honour
 which, I believe, will oblige
 G O D

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GOD to say one day, who hath required these things at your hands? And how unlike the Worship of the true GOD is that Veneration you express to the Images and Pictures of Saints, and to Relicks? How unlike that plain and Simple Worship which the Gospel enjoynes.? One would think it should a little startle you, to see, that your Church is afraid to let the second Commandement be known to the people, you know they leave it out in their Primmers and Catechismes, or if they mention it, they do so mince it, that one sees plainly, they are afraid the People should see the contrariety of their Worship to the express word

word of GOD. In the beginning of the Reformation, the very sight of this Commandement made people run away from the Church of R O M E as much as any thing; indeed to consider the general termes GOD uses there, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, &c.* Thou shalt not only not *Worship them* but *not so much as fall down before them*, would make a person, that is not taken more with the Golden Legends, than with Scripture, afraid of prostrations before Images, upon the account of devotion; it is not all your plea, that you do not terminate your worship on the Image, but on the person represented

presented by the Image, that will excuse you at the great tribunal; for not to mention, that in the same manner the Heathen used to defend their grossest Idolatry, and that you are forced to borrow their very Arguments, your own Authors do confesse, that the common people are apt to pay adoration, and do pay adoration to the Images themselves, and why will you lay such a Stumbling block before the people?

Much might be said of the adoration you pay to the consecrated Hoste; you confess, that the worship you give to it, is the same worship, you give to God; What if

if that Wafer should not be turned into the Body and Blood of Christ ? what if it should remain as very a Wafer , as it was before consecration ? what if it should not be God, as you have all the demonstration that sense or reason can give you , that it is not changed into another substance ? what monstrous Idolatry would this be ? Ay, but we believe it to be GOD ; why, Madam, doth your belief, that such a thing is God, or Christ, excuse you from Idolatry ? should you believe a Stone to be GOD, and adore it, might not you justly be charged with Idolatry ? you look upon the Heathens as Idolaters

be idolaters, because they adore
 the Sun ; Ay, but they be-
 lieve that Sun to be God,
 and how then, according to
 your plea, can they be Ido-
 laters ? If there be such a
 Transubstantiation in the Sa-
 crament, as you fancy, and
 an Adoration of the Hoste so
 very necessary, what's the
 reason, the Apostles of our
 Lord, that saw Christ before
 their eyes, (only could not
 believe that there were two
 Christs, one sitting at the ta-
 ble, the other reached out to
 them;) What's the reason, I
 say, that they sate still and
 paid no Adoration to the
 Bread, which according to
 you was Transubstantiated
 into Christ ? If they did not

E

adore

adore it, what a presumption is it in you to give the highest Worship to the consecrated bread upon a pretence, that that bread is God under the accidents of Bread? But of this I have said enough before, and could you but find time to read what our Authors have written upon this subject, it could be nothing but hardness of heart, and resolution to be blind, could keep you in a Church, that fills your head with Doctrines, contrary to the nature of a Sacrament, contrary to all that *Moses*, and the *Prophets*, nay and all sound *Philosophers* have said.

I will not say any thing here of your strange unbloody

bloody Sacrifice of the Mass, a thing unheard of in the purer Ages of Christianity, and which the Scripture is so great a stranger to, that one would wonder how Mankind came to light upon the notion. Nor of your Doctrine of Merits, because, I find your Priests have two strings to their Bow, and tell the people one thing, and their adversaries, when they dispute with them, another; affirm and deny it as they see occasion, and necessity requires. Only one thing I must needs take notice of before I take my leave, and that is the Gigantick Argument, that some of your Gentlemen boast of, and which strikes all Pro-

testants dead at the first hearing of it. If there be any thing true, this must be true, that there is a G O D, if there be a G O D, there must be a true Religion, if there be a true Religion, there must be a true revealed Religion, if there be a true revealed Religion, the Christian Religion must be that true revealed Religion, and if the Christian Religion be true, then the Religion of the Church of *R O M E* must be true, for the Argument, that proves the Christian Religion to be true proves the Religion of the Church of *R O M E* to be true, which is this, Either the Christian Religion was propagated

pagated without miracles or by miracles, if by miracles then it must be divine, if without miracles, then it is the greatest miracle, that a Religion, so contrary to flesh and blood, should prevail with sensual men. The same, say they, is true of the Religion of the Church of *ROME*. For if it be propagated by Miracles, it must be divine, if without Miracles, it must be so much more, because it prescribes things contrary to Flesh and blood, as Penances, Austerities, &c. And thousands of People do embrace it. I will not make myself merry here in a thing so serious, else I could have told you, that I have hard of an

Argument , when I was at School , somewhat like this , He that drinks well , sleeps well , he that sleeps well , commits no Sin , He that commits no Sin will be saved ; therefore he that drinks well will be saved. But I forbear ; And as to the aforesaid Argument , whereby one of your Priests , that hath printed it , thinks to end all Controversies , I will say no more but this. First , that as there is no Christian , but must readily confess , that the Miracles Christ and his Apostles wrought , were a Confirmation of the Divinity of their Doctrine , so there is no man of any brains , can admit of the other part of the *dilemma*.

as Universally true , that a Religion that goes against Flesh and blood , if propagated without Miracles , must therefore be necessarily Divine. *Secondly* , that so far as the Religion of the Church of *ROME* agrees with the truly Christian Religion, so far it is undoubtedly true , and it will naturally follow , that if the Christian Religion be true, the Religion of the Church of *ROME*, so far as it agrees with the Christian Religion, must needs be true. And the same may be said of the Protestant Religion, but that the Roman Religion must therefore be true, where it goes away and differs from the truly Christian Religion,

revealed to us in the Gospel, is a consequence, which none but Children can approve of. Thirdly with this Argument, a man might prove the Divinity of almost any Religion in the World. He that is no stranger to History, must needs know, what severities, what austerities of life the *Brachmans*, or the Heathen *Friers* in the *Indies* do both prescribe, and practise, and what Profelites they make, and how full the Kingdom of the great *Mogol* is of them, how some Wallow in ashes day and night, how others go charged with heavy Iron Chaines all their dayes, how others stand upright upon their Leggs for whole weekes together

gether, &c. How in *Japan* and other places of the *Indies*, the Priests perswade the people to fast themselves to death, to go long Pilgrimages, to give all they have to the Priests, to throw themselves down from steep rocks, and break their necks, and all to arrive the sooner to the happiness of another World, &c. I think there cannot be things more contrary to flesh and blood, than these, and yet we see these Doctrines are propagated daily without any force of Armes, only by Example and perswasion, to be sure without any Miracle, but, I hope, that doth not prove their Religion to be div'n^e. It's a Dictate of the

light of Nature, that the way to Heaven is strait, and therefore people, that are religiously inclined, are easily won over to those men whom they see exercise such severities upon themselves.

To Conclude, Madam, when all is done, what the true Church is, must be tryed by the Writings of the Evangelists, and Apostles. We see, that even in the Apostles dayes, corruptions crept into the Church, Witness the Churches of *Corinth*, *Galatia*, and *Colosse*, &c. and the simplicity of the Gospel began even then to be perverted and mingled with idle and foolish opinions and practises, and therefore we must needs think,

think, that after the Apostles, decease, the Church of Christ was subject to the same fate, so that if there be any stand-ard or touchstone left, where-by the truth and sincerity of a Church can be tried (and we must needs think so well of GODS providence that he would not leave his Church without some rule to rectifie their Errors by, in case she should be infected with any) it must be the Primitive institution of the Christian Religion, and that Church, as I said before, which teaches things, that approach nearest to that primitive institution, must be the true Church.

And, Madam, do but once more for your Souls sake, and
for

for your Salvations sake,
 compare the Doctrines and
 practises of the Church of
ROME, with the Doctrines
 and practises of the Gospel,
 the Fountain of Christianity,
 and try whether you can find
 there, the Doctrines of *Communion under one kind*, of
publick prayers in a tongue unknown to the people, of *Purgatory*, of the *Mass*, of *Transubstantiation*, of the Church
 of *Rome's* supremacy and in-
 fallibility, of *Worshipping and adoring the Virgin Mary*, and
praying to Saints, of *Veneration of Relicks and Images*, of
adoration of the Hoste, &c.
 Do not force any places of
 Scripture, and try whether
 you can make sense of any
 of

of these Doctrines by Scripture? View the Stream of the Gospel, and search whether there be any thing like these Doctrines in it? why will you make your reason a Slave to your Priests magisterial Sentences? How can you answer it to G O D, that you did not improve your reason more? What have you your reason for, but to judge what is agreeable to the Word of G O D, and what is not? Is not this acting like a Creature void of reason, to be guided altogether by what a few blind guides say to you, without enquiring at *the Law and Testimony*, whether things are so as they say or no? Wonderful stupidity! I stand amazed

mazed at it. It is not all the seeming Holinets of those Priests you converse withal, that make the Church you are in, a true Church. There is no Sect in the World, but when they are under a Cloud, necessity and the discouragement they are under, and their desire to make Profelytes, makes them outwardly Religious. There may be, and no doubt are Zealous and outwardly pious men in all Religions in the World, but that doth not make every Religion true, and divine. An outward shew of Piety is the only way of propagating any Religion. The Devil himself could not propagate Heathenisme and Idolatry, but
by

by the pretended Zeal, and
 Piety, and Abstinence, and
 Mortification of *Apollonius*
Tyaneus, who yet by the con-
 fession of the whole Christian
 world, was no better then a
 Wizard and Conjuror; I make
 no application to any particu-
 lar Priest in the Church of
R O M E; I do not deny, but
 men may be in great Errors,
 and be very Zealous for their
 errours, and seemingly very
 pious in their Zeal, and when
 their Errors are not very wil-
 ful, and destroy not the true
 Worship of G O D, for ought
 I know, they may find mercy
 in the day of our Lord. I
 grant there is a great shew of
 outward Piety in the Church
 of **R O M E** very dazeling and
 very

very moving , but the great
 danger lyes here , that the
 Worship they give to GOD
 with one hand, they strike and
 pull down with the other : I
 know too well the practise of
 their Churches, and a Heathen
 that should come into their
 Temples beyond Sea, would
 verily believe , that they
 Worship a Multiplicity of
 Gods as well as he , what-
 ever their pretentions may be
 to the contrary ; It is not
 what people say, so much as
 what they do , that GOD
 takes notice of, and though
 you should Ten Thousand
 times protest, that you Wor-
 ship and adore GOD alone,
 yet while GOD sees you a-
 dore the Virgin Mary, with
 as

as great Zeal and reverence,
 as you do him, pray to her
 oftener then you do to him,
 make as many bowes to her,
 and other Saints, as you do
 to him, and other things of
 that nature, how can he be-
 lieve you? Religion is a thing
 that will not bear jests and
 Hypocrisy, G O D will not be
 put off with contradictions be-
 tween speeches and Practises.

Madam, I do from my heart
 Pitty you, and as it might be
 the weaknes of your Judg-
 ment, that might lead you in-
 to this Erroneous Church, so I
 beset ch you, for Christs sake,
 to return to the Church,
 you have rashly left, where
 you cannot run a hazard
 if you will but follow the
 plain

plain Doctrines of the Gospel, besides which, we preach nothing, and enjoy n nothing as necessary to Salvation. Should these entreaties and beseechings be alledged against you in the last day, as things which you have, contrary to reason, refused and slighted, how dreadful would your condition be? I have discharged my Duty, and given you warning, I would not have your Guilt lye at my Door, and therefore have let you know my real thoughts and Sentiments concerning your condition, and the Church you are in. The Great GOD of Heaven open your eyes, that you may see and fear.

Time

Time was when you would have believed us as much as you do now the Priests of the Church of *ROME*. It's strange, that now they should speak nothing but truths, and we nothing but falshood. Do you think, we do not understand the Scriptures, and Fathers, and Antiquity, as well as they? And can we all be so besotted with interest and passion that none of us should yied to the dictates of their Church, if we could prevail with our sense and reason to believe, that the things wherein they differ from us were agreeable to the Gospel? sure we have a great many men among us that are great Lovers of Peace, and would be

beglad that the whole Christi-
 an world were agreed, and
 would these men stand out a-
 gainst that union, if it could
 be done with a safe Consci-
 ence? Certainly we have men
 as learned among us, as ever
 the Sun did shine upon, nay
 the Church of *R O M E* hath
 at this day few men to equal
 ours for Learning and know-
 ledge. And would all our
 Learned men be so stubborne
 and obstinate, as not to agree
 with the Church of *R O M E*,
 if they did not see plainly,
 that *there is Death in that*
Pot, and that the Errours in
 that Church cannot be sub-
 scribed to without hazarding
 the welfare of their Souls? I
 will but use your own Ar-
 gument,

gument, when you went over to the Church of *R O M E*, and were perswaded by the earnestness of her Priests to yeild to their reasonings, what pleasure can we take in promoting your Damnation? What can be our interest in deceiving you? You used that Argument on their side, why will you not use it on our side, Judge you, whither we, that have the Gospel on our side for what we teach, are not in a safer way, than that Church, which for all the new Doctrines they have added to the Old Creedes, are forced to run to the broken Cisterns of Tradition, and I know not what Fathers, whose writings they know not

not whether they be genuine or no? As you are now, you live in willful opposition to the Doctrine and Precepts of the Gospel, And O Remember what St. Paul doth say 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8. That the Lord Jesus will ere long come down from Heaven with all his Holy Angels to take Vengeance on those who have disobeyed the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Once more therefore I charge you before Almighty GOD, and our Lord Jesus Christ, to repent of your Errours, and to return to the bosome of that Church, in which you received your life, and being, and the Principles of Religion and Christianity. But if all this seem

ine seem to you no more but
 w, Bugbears, I have delivered
 ion my own Soul, and should
 pts be sorry that this discourse
 m. should stand as a Witness a-
 say gainst you in the Last day,
 the which GOD knows was
 me only intended as a motive
 his to draw you back to that
 ce Fold from which you have
 ed Wandered and gone astray.
 I am

Madam, Your Faithfull
 Feb. 20. Friend to serve You.

1677.

N. N.

FINIS

Postscript

Madam,

AS in the publishing of this Letter I had no other design, but to prevent the fall of others into the like dangers, so I have particularly insisted on those motives, which have of late tempted some persons to go over to the Roman Church, and though I have represented these motives as yours, yet in this I have been so far from doing any thing against the laws of private discourse, or friendship, or acquaintance, that

that I have only touch'd upon the common stumbling-blocks, which make unwary people joyne themselves to that Church; blocks, which might easily be removed, if men or Women would but give themselves leave to think, and would prefer the solid dictates of their reason before the suggestions of their soft, and sickly passions. One thing I had almost forgot, and which indeed is the great bug-bear, whereby your Church men fright their people from running over to us, and that is, that our Church began but about an hundred and fifty years ago, that *Luther* and *Zwinglius* were the Authors

of it, and that we had no Church before; pittiful shifts indeed to keep people from seeing the Sun at noon; suppose our Religion did but begin then, why, must people be alwayes in an Errour? must they never reform when they have done amiss? if there were Monstrous Errors in the Church of *ROME*, which the aforesaid persons saw would be the death of Christianity, and which they could not subscribe to without debauching their reason, or wronging both their own and other mens Consciences, was it not rational, they should protest against such things, to give their fellow Christians warning? when

when the House is on fire,
 would you have no body a-
 wake to alarm the Neigh-
 bours to look to themselves?
 Did they see so many thou-
 sand men ready to be
 drown'd, and would you
 have had them hold their
 tongues, and barbarously
 suffered them all to be
 drown'd? Did they see the
 Christian Religion like to be
 swallowed up by darkness
 and Ignorance, and was it
 not time to rouse the slum-
 bering world? But however,
 that these men were the first
 broachers of our Religion,
 is Notoriously false; First,
 because long before them,
 there were men that lived in
 the External communion of

the Church of *ROME*, but
 dislik'd the Errours, as they
 crept in, and grew dange-
 rous, and though they were
 overaw'd and silenc'd many
 times by the higher powers
 of the Roman Court, yet
 they both detested those cor-
 ruptions, and as they had
 opportunity, protested against
 them, as were an easy matter
 to prove from age to age,
 if it had not been done al-
 ready over and over by Di-
 vines of our Church, so that
 though these men, that
 lived long before *Luther*, and
 whom *GOD* still rais'd to
 vindicate his truth as it grew
 more, and more polluted,
 were not call'd Protestants
 by the People, yet in effect
 they

they were so, and consequently there were Protestants many years before *Luther* and *Zwinglius*; And though they were not suffered by the Ignorant, and imperious Ecclesiastical powers to meet and assemble themselves in publick, yet they made a Church, as much as the followers of Holy *Athanasius* did, when the whole world was turned *Arrian*, as much as *Elijah*, and those seven thousand, the Oracle mentions, made a Church, when the Whole Country was over run with Idolaters, These seven thousand we read lay hid, and durst not appear in publick, being oppress'd by the Idolatrous

F 3 powers,

powers, that sat at the stern, and thought there was no good fishing but in troubled waters. And indeed in this manner our Church was dispers'd long before *Luther*, among the greater multitude of the followers of the corrupted Roman Church, as a hand-ful of wheat lies scatterd in a bushel of Chaff, and though it did not appear in Pomp and grandeur, yet that external splendour is not essential to the truth of a Church, your own men may be convinced by the aforementioned examples.

Secondly ; if your Champions speak strictly of the Religion, which we profess
in

in the Church of *England*; they are under a mistake, when they make *Luther* or *Zwinglius* the Authors of it, for our Reformation began some time after, and was both begun, and carried on with great deliberation and consideration under *Edward* the 6. by publick authority, whose proper province it is to take notice of what is amiss in a Kingdom or Commonwealth, whether it be in Church or State, and to reform and mend it. It's no great matter, when a Reformation begins, so the Reformation be but just; and if such a Reformation had begun but yesterday, that would not have made it un-

lawful, and that our Reformation was just and necessary hath been prov'd by our Divines beyond all reasonable contradiction, and how could it but be just, when the decrees of the Church of *ROME* control'd the Word of the Living *GOD*, and vyed with the Oracles of the Gospel. How and when the several Errours crept into that Church, is not Material to determine, it's enough we found them there, and it was *GODS* mercy not to give all the learned men of that age over to beleive a lye. But it's pretty to hear your Church-men talk of the novelty of our Religion, when it is evident to all the
un-

understanding world , that our first Reformers began no new Religion , but desired only to keep to the Old. All their endeavour was to keep to the Religion of the Bible , and to cut off all superfluities , and things prejudicial to Salvation, and was there any hurt in that ? They saw , that many things then in use in the Church of *ROME* were diametrically opposite to the Doctrines and practises of the Primitive Church, and they justly thought it their duty to reduce the Church to the antient pattern ; the proud Clergy of the Roman Church would not yield to it, but would have all their new fangles , and all their

additions to the Antient
 Symbols received as articles of
 Faith, though all perish'd,
 and the coat of Christ were
 rent into a thousand pieces;
 the more humble, and more
 moderate of the Clergy, saw
 the pride and insolence of
 the other, and trembled, and
 thus we and they parted, we
 kept to the old Religion,
 and your men chose the new,
 and much good it may do
 you with it, and pray Judge
 by this, which is the Schis-
 matick Church, we or they?
 we that would have healed
Israel, or they that would
 not be healed; so that it is
 not our Religion that be-
 gan so lately as 150 years
 ago, about *Luthers* time, but
 it's

it's yours that commenced then; for you then embraced the new additions to the antient Catholick creeds with greater greediness, and were resolv'd to maintain that by bravado's, which you were not able to defend with Arguments. Its a very ordinary thing for people, who once incline to the Communion of the Roman Church to demand of us, before they go over, whither a person may be saved in that Church. The Charity and moderation our Divines usually express in their answer to this query, I am sensible hath done our Church some harm, whereas the Roman Priests, being bold in their uncharitableness.

ness, and damning all that are out of their communion, make some weak people believe, that they must be in the right, because they are more daring in their asseverations. We have far greater reason to be peremptory in excluding the members of the Church of *R O M E* from Salvation, than they have to exclude us, for if that Church be guilty of Idolatry (as I see , your Divines find it a very hard task to answer the Arguments of our Learned men, that prove it) Those that are guilty of this crime may soon be resolved by the Apostle what their lot is like to be in another world ; for *No Idolater*, saith St. *Paul* ;
mean-

meaning one that lives, and dies so, *shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* 1 Cor. 6. 9 yet we are modest, and whatever the principles of that Church may lead men to, we hope, there may be many in that Church, that either, while they live in the communion of that Church, have an aversion from the dangerous, and Idolatrous practices of it, or sometimes before they die do heartily repent of the absurd, and unreasonable Doctrines, and worship, they have too long asserted, and complied with, and of such we cannot but entertain a very favourable opinion, and indeed I could name you some very famous men

men both in *France* and *Italy*, who, though they have continued in the Communion of that Church, *i. e.* have not joyn'd themselves to any particular publick Protestant Church, yet have not approv'd of such things in the Roman Church, as manifestly obstruct mens Salvation, and though like *Nicodemus* they have not dared openly to avow their dislike of such Errours, for fear of danger, yet in their hearts they have abhorr'd them, and declared so much to their Friends, and intimate acquaintance. And though their seeming communion with a Church so Erroneous, cannot be totally excused, because it looks like

like a tacite approbation of
 her Errours , yet since we
 read of *Joseph*, that he was
 a Disciple of Christ secretly,
 and notwithstanding his not
 confessing Christ publicly,
 accepted of GOD , we
 hope such mens continuing
 in the external communion of
 the Roman Church is not a
 willful Errour , but rather
 a pardonable infirmity, a ti-
 morousness which hath no-
 thing of malice in it , and
 therefore will not hin-
 der them from Salvation.
 We know not what mercy
 GOD may shew to many
 poor people in that Church,
 who are invincibly Ignorant,
 and never saw a Bible, from
 whence they might rectify
 their

their mistakes, and do live honestly in this present world ; but we must withal confess, that the Servant, who hath known his Masters will, and hath not done it, shall be beaten with many stripes, and whether those that have been enlightened in our Church, and have tasted the good Word of GOD, and cannot but see our Agreement with the Gospel, and after all this embrace the Errors of the Roman Church, whether these will be excusable at the last day, we justly doubt of ; To live in great Errours is to live in Sin, but where that living in Errours is joyn'd with resistance of great light, and know-

knowledge, there the Sin becomes all crimson, which was but of a faint red before; And if this be the Character of Christs Friends to do whatsoever he commands us, then the inference is very easy, that those cannot be Christ's Friends, nor reign with him in Heaven, that wilfully leave undone, what they know he hath commanded, and set up a new Worship, which he hath no where commanded: Madam, had you never seen such a thing as the Scriptnre, your going over to that Church might have deserved some apology, but when you were surrounded with the beams of that light which shines in darkness,

as *St. Peter* calls the word, with all those rayes about you, to shut your eyes, and desperately to venture upon a Church, which enjoines men to live against some of Gods laws, as against *Exod. 20. 5, 6.* and *Matth. 26. 27. &c.* and consequently obliges them to prepare for G O D S displeasure, this, I confess, is an action, which, as it favours of great willfulness, so I question, if you dye in't without serious repentance, whether the joys you hope for, will ever fall to your share. If your Churchmen do mean honestly, and do truly aim at the peace of Christendom, and in good earnest design the Union of of men that profess the name
of

of Christ, why will not they part with those Doctrines that are so great an offence, not only to all Protestants, but to Jews and Mahometans too? if that worshipping of Saints and Images be not necessary, but only useful, why will not they quit that Worship, which by their own pretences is needless, especially when they might do so much good by it; if the Cup was formerly given to the Laity, why will not they to effect the aforesaid Union restore it to the Laity? If the substance of the Sacrament, and the comfort arising from it may remaine entire, without obliging men to beleive a Transubstantiation, or Adoration
of

of the consecrated Wafer, why will not they for peace sake lay aside such Doctrines, which neither themselves, nor any creature understands? If Heaven and Hell are sufficient motives to a Holy life, why will not they for quietness sake renounce their Doctrine of purgatory, which by their own confession hath no ground in Scripture?

Madam, I have that charitable opinion of you, that if you had but taken a view of the Worship of the Church of *ROME*, as it is practic'd beyond Sea in places, where there is no fear of contradiction from any Hereticks, where they may freely and securely act according to their principles,

principles, had you seen the mode of Worshipping the Virgin *Mary* at *R O M E*, or in *Spain*, or *Italy*, the sight of it would have certainly discourag'd you from embracing that Religion, which now you seem to be mainly delighted with, for indeed the Religion of the Church of *R O M E* at this time, if a man were to guess from that, which hath the greatest outward Veneration, is little else, then a Worship of the Virgin *Mary*. The very beggars beyond-Sea in begging of alms, beg more for the Virgin *Marie's* sake, then for Christ's sake. This, Madam, I know to be true, who am no stranger to forreign parts,

parts, and I will assure you, that in those Cities or Towns, where both Papists, and Protestants have the free exercise of their Religion, you shall live Twenty years in a Town, before you hear that any Protestant is turned Papist, (so few charms are there in the Exercise of their Religion beyond Sea) but you shall not be above a year or two in such a Town, before you hear that several Papists are turn'd Protestants (such a force hath truth;) The Religion of the Church of *ROME*, as it is practis'd in *England*, lookes harmless. Now and then upon some great festival they shew you a Picture of the Virgin Mary,

or

or of some other Saint, and the honest Priest qualifies every Doctrine, makes the Errours soft, and plausible, and they dare not, living in a Protestant Country, serve the Host of Heaven, I mean Saints and Angels with all their appertenances as they do in places, where there are no Protestants to watch them.

Here their Religion seems to be without a sting, and is clad in the fleece of Sheep, but if you could but make a Voyage into *Spain* or *Italy*, I doubt not but you would see the Venome of it, and avoid it, and the only way not to be of the Church of *ROME* would be to go to *ROME*, provided you do not go without your Bible.

In

In good truth that Church hath turn'd Christianity into a meer outward pomp and splendor, which ravishes the eye, but can never content a mans reason. The glistering Gold in their Temples, the curious Images of Saints and Angels, the numerons and Stately Altars, the mighty Silver Statues, the rich, and glorious vestments you see up and down in their Churches, strike the senses into a kind of ecstasie, and it must be sense only, for a considerate mind, that searches the inside of things as well as the outside, cannot be so easily gull'd and deceiv'd ; and this outward pomp they make not the least sign of the truth
of

of their Church, not remembering, that if this be a good signe, the Idolatrous people in *Japan*, and *China*, whose Temples are infinitely more shining, and glorious, will have a better Title to the true Church than they; I must confess, that in policy, and worldly craft, and cunning the Church of *ROME* exceeds ours, for they have not only turn'd the Spiritual Worship of the Gospel, into a sensual service, into outward Religious formalities, a thing strangely pleasing to flesh and blood, but they have shooes that will fit all sorts of feet, great and small, and have remedies for all distempers, and you may go to Heaven

G

in

in that Church either through the straight way, or through the broad, which you please, they can fit the Melancholly person, and the Jovial, they have Monasteries, and Nunneries, and severities to content the one, and know how to allow greater liberty to the other; they can either send a man to happiness through a tedious task of mortification, if he likes that method best, or help him thither by a quicker dispatch, by confession, attrition, and absolution upon a death bed, when the man can hold Sin and the world no longer: Live, or die, you cannot do amiss in that Church, for living you may be forgiven

given, and after Death you may be pray'd out of Purgatory, sooner or later, according as you will spend money upon Masses, for gold doth strangely quicken these supplications.

Such a Church, Madam, you have espoused, and divorced your self from one that prefers the Wisdom of G O D, and of the Gospel before the Wisdom of the flesh, and glories in dealing plainly and honestly with all men, that keeps close to the Scriptures, and yet is not against those Pious customs of antiquity, which are not contradictory to the Scriptures, that generously maintains the prerogative of G O D, and gives no o-

G 2

ther

ther Honour to Saints and Angels, but what may consist with the glory of her Creator, that hath made no new Articles of Faith, but keeps to the old, and thinks it Rebellion against GOD, to enjoyn things as necessary to Salvation, which GOD never made so; that urges the strictest life, and encourages nothing, but what may promote true piety and devotion, that hath no more Ceremonies, but what are decent, and labours to free Religion at once from slovenliness and superstition, that secures the Right of Sovereign Princes, and Teaches her Children to live like good subjects and good Christians,
and

and though it be her misfortune, that too many of her pretended members live like Enemies of Christianity, yet that's not long of her Doctrines and Constitutions, but long of the stubbornness of men, who will not be reform'd by her Precepts; As no man blames Christ or his Apostles, because *Judas* was a Hypocrite or because *Simon Magus* profess'd their Religion, so they betray great Ignorance and simplicity, that for the Monstrous impieties of many, that profess themselves members of our Assemblies despise and slight our Church, which in her principles is most averse from all such practices, a Church, which

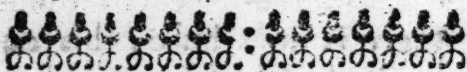
as, for mine own particular I have deliberately and premeditatedly embraced, and chosen, so, I hope, I shall never be so much forsaken of GOD or of my reason, as to quit it to become a Papist. I have not been altogether a careless observer of the several Christian Churches, dispers'd through the world. Desire of mine own Salvation hath made me take particular notice, what corruption there is in them, and what affinity they have with the Primitive Professors of Christianity; And I must freely confess upon a serious Examination of the Scripture, and the Fathers of the three first Centuries after Christ, that

that from my heart I think,
 there is no Church this day
 in all the Christian world, be
 it Eastern, or Western, that
 in her principles and consti-
 tutions bears so much of the
 Image of the truly Primitive
 Church, or comes so near it,
 as the Church of *England*, a
 Church, which as your fore-
 Fathers had courage to burn
 for so I verily beleive, that
 he understands not her Inno-
 cent designs, and excellent
 rules, that dares not dy a
 Martyr in her cause.

*Once more your Faithful
 Friend to serve You.*

N. N.

FINIS



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